

[Waitress]

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WAITRESS

"Sa-ay," the waitress drawled, "am I tired! There's only two of us on this late at night. And Lou, she's the other waitress, parks herself in the kitchen most of the time. She's kind of sweet on the cook. Always hanging around back. It gives me a pain. There's no use squawking about it. This restaurant's a sort of family affair, I guess. The cook's cousin to the boss. Cousin to the kitchen helper, too. It's a wonder the boss's daughters don't work here. He'd like them to, I bet, but they're just too stuck up for that. We have to hop around plenty when they come in for a feed. Expect us to wait on them hand and foot. They're Italian. I'm French- Irish. Dark like my father's folks, and ready for a little fun like my father's folks. He came down from Canada. When we were kids he'd hold kitchen-junkets at the house every Saturday night. The house'd be full till three in the morning- just farmer folks dancing, and singing, and having a good time.

"I was born in Tunbridge in 1914. There certainly wasn't anything exciting in that dump. The only excitement was the Tunbridge Fair they hold every year. They call it the World's Fair and the [Drunkards'?] Convention. All the big shots that don't give you a tumble on their hometown streets - up there, they fall all over you. On the fair grounds everybody hails everybody else, big shots and little stuff, and if you meet them the next day on the street and they stare right past you - well, you don't care 'cause you've grown to expect it.

"I see my people every week or so. My own father's dead. I've got a stepfather now. As far back as I can remember my father did farming and 2 carpentering, but my mother tells me he'd worked in the Barre sheds until his health failed him. I've got three sisters, two half-

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brothers and one [half?]-sister. Lord, I was glad to get out. That place was dead. I'm trying to get one of my sisters to come and live with me. Only trouble is she's been through high school, studied typing and short-hand, so she wants an office job. There aren't so many office jobs in town. She's kind of talking of going to Montpelier. There's the State House there and the National Life, and plenty of W.P.A. jobs, too. It'd be fun having an apartment together. Allie - she's my sister - has a boy friend lives in Montpelier. He works up here in the quarries. Makes pretty good money. If she got a chance in town and see him oftener I bet they'd be married in three months. Lord, I couldn't see myself getting married to one of those Tunbridge farmers and settling down to nothing for the rest of my life. Not me. I been in town two years now, and I been having a pretty good time for myself. Nothing swell, but a good enough time. Riding, dancing, stopping somewhere for eats and drinks.

"If Allie insists on going to Montpelier, I s'pose I could manage to get a job in a restaurant there. The other day I was talking to a girl that waits on table on State Street in Montpelier. She says there's an awful snooty crowd around there. Some of those office girls act as if they were the Queen of [Sirba?], and I guess they don't make a hell-of-a-lot more than we do. I've always figured Montpelier that way. I mean artificial and putting on airs. Barre's more honest.

"Lord, here's a couple of customers. They come here a lot. 'Specially when it's hot. Bet you it's beer for them. See, I knew that's what they'd 3 order.

"They'll keep having rounds of beer till closing time. Beer and chips.' Saturday nights they have sandwiches. Regular as clock work. Beer and chips during the week. Beer and sandwiches Saturday nights. They been doing that for a long time. When I first came here he was a better spender. But I guess he could afford it then. My sister's boyfriend knows him. He runs one of the engines that goes up to the quarries. I've heard him talk in here of how it's one of the steepest railroad grades in the country. Seems he's been having tough luck lately. The mother died last fall, and right after that his father took sick. He's in a hospital somewhere. He used to work in the quarries, too. I don't know if it's his lungs

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or not. Anyway, there's two sisters and a brother at home. Only the brother works. So all-in-all you can't blame the fellow for being tight with his money. His girlfriend ought to feel lucky she's getting her beer and chips. She always looks satisfied. She's kind of pretty.

"We don't serve many regular dinners and suppers. Not unless someone plans a party. Most of our business is in-between-time lunches. Lots of people who come here like Italian food, even if they're not Italian themselves. Funny, isn't it? I go for spaghetti and meatballs, and macaroni, myself. We serve a lot of those Italian sausages - salamini they're called. And salami sandwiches. We serve a lot of those with beer. It's funny - the other Italians 'll stick to Italian food, but their kids go about fifty-fifty for Italian and American cooking. The Scotch go for expensive foods, they aren't a bit Scotch when it comes to [filling?] their stomachs. Chicken's a favorite with them.

"If my sister and I go to work in Montpelier, I'll kind of miss this food. They don't make so much of Italian eats down there. If they want a 4 good food they come up here. Italian food's tasty. It makes you want to drink. That's our biggest business - beer.

"Allie's boyfriend likes working in the quarries. He's a crazy kid. Likes danger anyway. He's always speeding along in that old car of his. Quarrying's a job that pays well, though. Pays well when they're working. They lose a lot of time in winter. When there's snow and ice. And even in the summer when it rains. Wet granite's pretty slippery. They don't have as many accidents there as you'd naturally expect. Derricks and everything are run by signals, and everybody watches 'em pretty close. The workmen are careful. Just the same I'd rather not pick a boyfriend that has to go down in those quarry holes all year round. Guess I'd be worrying all the time.